

Covid-19 Update - 25 March 2020

Introduction

This short briefing has been prepared on behalf of the UK construction sector to brief companies and individuals on the ongoing repercussions of the Covid-19 coronavirus for our sector.

The Briefing has been prepared in collaboration between the industry's leading trade and representative bodies: Association for Consultancy & Engineering, Build UK, Chartered Institute of Building, Civil Engineering Contractors Association, Construction Plant-hire Association, Construction Products Association, Electrical Contractors Association, Federation of Master Builders, National Federation of Builders, and Institution of Civil Engineers.

We are also grateful to Building, Construction Enquirer, Construction Manager, Construction News, Highways and New Civil Engineer for support in distribution to the wider industry.

Site Operating Procedures

The Cabinet Office has confirmed that construction in England can continue *as long as it can be done safely AND in accordance with the Public Health England guidance*. The latest Construction Leadership Council Site Operating Procedures (SOP) align with the latest Public Health England guidance: <http://www.constructionleadershipcouncil.co.uk/news/site-operating-procedures-during-covid-19/> As this guidance changes, the SOP will be updated.

If for any reason sites and companies are not able to comply with the PHE guidance, then they must cease activities until they can.

NHS Hospitals

NHS Hospitals have made the following request for supplies from industry to support their fight against Covid-19:

- FFP3 masks
- Full face visors (transparent and either disposable or reusable)
- Safety goggles and glasses
- Hand sanitizer
- Haz mat / full body suits.

If you can source any of the following please contact any of the trade associations noted at the end of this newsletter, who will liaise with those coordinating this work.

Ban on evictions for commercial tenants

Commercial tenants who cannot pay their rent because of coronavirus will be protected from eviction. More information is available [here](#).

COVID-19 Corporate Financing Facility - Now open for applications

Under the new COVID-19 Corporate Financing Facility, the Bank of England will buy short term debt from larger companies. All non-financial companies that meet the criteria set out on the

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Bank of England's website are eligible. The scheme is now available for applications. More information is available from the [Bank of England](#).

Travel within London

Making non-essential journeys risks lives. Please only travel if your journey is absolutely essential. If you are a key worker and your journey is absolutely essential, the busiest times are 05.45-07:30 and 16:00-17:30. If possible, please avoid these times, for the safety of passengers and staff.

CITB - Support for Apprentices

CITB is paying, in advance, apprenticeship attendance grants for second and third year apprentices to help keep skills in the construction industry amid the Coronavirus outbreak. The payments will be made from 6 April for apprentices already subject to CITB grant support and who are currently in the second or third year of their apprenticeship for the remainder of the year. The payments are expected to be able to support 7,500 apprentices, and will advance up to £2,500 in attendance grant at a time when retaining apprentices is critical. To read the press release on this please click [here](#).

CITB has worked with the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) to discuss funding rules on breaks in learning for apprentices. ESFA have issued guidance for apprentices, employers and training providers, you can read the guidance [here](#). A dedicated email helpline for all apprentices and their employers providing advice and signposting during COVID-19 has been set-up by CITB. Please e-mail us at Apprenticeships.COVID19@citb.co.uk for assistance.

HS&E App

CITB has developed a free app so employers can run their own in-house interim testing. The app will give employers a level of local assurance to help them determine if an employee is safe to work on their site. The app will be available to download from app stores shortly. A PC download version is available [here](#), under the HS&E Test heading. The app will give breathing space to employers during the temporary closure of all Pearson Vue HS&E test centres and the suspension of testing throughout our Independent Test Centre (ITC) network.

New Employer Support Database

Today CITB will launch a database with useful information and links to help employers during the COVID-19 crisis. To view CITB's COVID-19 updates page, including information on Grants, Funding and the NCC, [click here](#).

Your feedback is vital - [new survey 23 March](#)

The construction industry's federations are in regular dialogue with representatives from the UK Government to discuss the impact of Covid-19. To support this work we need feedback from businesses as to how they are affected by the pandemic.

Please take 5 minutes to fill in this survey to ensure that this work is supported by the most up-to-date feedback from industry. The new survey can be found at <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/23MarCovidConstruction>

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